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MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 84 TOLEDO, OHIO DECEMBER, 1938

MARECHAL BONNIVET CORNEILLE DE LYON
GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

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FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

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Art is that science whose laws applied to all things made by man make them most pleasing to the senses. *George W. Stevens.*

EDITORIAL

THEY say times are better.

That is, the people who try to sell us mops, soap, lumber, paper, ink, paints, and even talent for our concerts say so.

That, they say, is why the cost of all these things is going up.

They also tell us, in the last few months, that people have more money to spend.

We are glad to know it, if only by hearsay.

We in the Art Museum have no personal knowledge of any such thing.

The interest rate on bonds has not improved.

And if our Members, and a great many people who ought to be members, have more money to spend, none of it has yet made hasty passage through our coffers to our suppliers.

Meanwhile use and apparent appreciation of the Museum continue to grow.

The only method we have of increasing our means to meet the expanding desires and demands for our intellectual wares is in approaching the generous and the helpful among our citizens.

A new year is at hand. The bills for dues are out. We eagerly await evidence of better times in the response thereto.

AN EARLY FRENCH MASTERPIECE

THE Toledo Museum has recently acquired as the gift of its Founder, Edward Drummond Libbey, a most important French painting of the sixteenth century. This is the portrait of Maréchal Bonnivet, the work of Corneille de Lyon.

Perhaps even more than most of his contemporaries, Corneille is something of a legendary figure. But few facts of his life are known. Even the dates of both his birth and death are uncertain, although it is estimated that the former occurred about 1505 and the latter perhaps in 1574. It is established with certainty that he was located at Lyons by 1534, that he became painter to the second son of Francis I, who had succeeded to the title of Dauphin by the death of his elder brother. There is documentary evidence that upon his accession to the throne in 1547 as Henry II he naturalized Corneille and made him painter to the king, thus giving him rank equal to that of François Clouet. It is also known that he painted numerous portraits of personages attached to the court.

Beyond these scant facts there is little record of his life and career. He is said to have been a Fleming, born at The Hague. Why he came to Lyons and how he attracted the attention of the court are interesting but unanswered questions. It is assumed that his contact with royalty was established during visits which Francis I and his entourage paid to Lyons in 1536. Whether he remained constantly at his adopted city or journeyed about with the court is uncertain.

As little is known of his method of working as of his life. The Clouets, the great masters of the period, sketched their sitters in chalk, and from these drawings proceeded to the finished portraits in oil. Many of their chalk drawings still remain. But few exist from which a Corneille de Lyon might have been painted. It has been suggested that he may have worked directly over his drawing, thus obliterating it, or that others travelling with the court may have executed drawings which were sent to him and from which he produced paintings. It is uncertain whether he himself, having completed a portrait, then made copies of it, or whether he had associates or assistants to whom he delegated the multiplication of his works.

With such slight knowledge of his life, his methods and his output, generalization upon his style and his merits is difficult and dangerous. A very considerable number of paintings exist, all of certain marked similarities in general appearance, which it has been customary to attribute to his hand. These are portraits in three-

quarter profile against a bright green or blue background, usually darkened at top and one side. They range in size from that of a post card to somewhat larger than a sheet of letter paper, the smaller ones predominating.

The range of quality is even greater. Some are indifferent and inconsequential. Others are only fair. A few are of such superb quality as to rank their artist as a master inferior only to the Clouets. At least one, that of the Count of Chateauneuf, once passed for a Holbein. Of this great honor its quality is not unworthy, although its style is quite dissimilar to that of the German master's works. For that matter, it is equally divergent from the manner of those works which seem most surely to be by Corneille.

No satisfactory distribution of the works of the type has ever been made. One scholar accepted as the product of Corneille's hand a group of portraits collected at or near Lyons by a seventeenth century amateur, and by him attributed, perhaps on the basis of tradition, to the artist. About these he assembled a number of paintings which, due to similarities of style, he considered authentic. A later connoisseur has cast doubt upon this list and, upon the basis of the style of portraits of personages known to have been painted by Corneille, has attributed to him many of the inferior pictures of the type, assigning the ones of greater quality to a group of unknown artists.

The logic of such a division of these works would not seem to be the best. It is quite possible that those remaining depictions of known sitters to Corneille are but studio copies of the master's originals, and it would seem highly unlikely that so inferior an artist as Dimier[1] makes him would have been favored with royal honors while other and better men whose names are not even recorded would have worked in a highly improved version of his style.

We prefer, therefore, until further evidence is adduced, to think of his name as denoting a style of portraiture rather than indicating the output of a single man, or even of a single studio, and to consider the best, rather than the worst, of the group as emanating from his hand: the others being perhaps less brilliant examples of his own efforts, or the product of his assistants or imitators.

Among the finest and largest of all the works of the type associated with Corneille de Lyon is the Portrait of Maréchal Bonnivet. Measuring nine and one-quarter by twelve and three-eighths inches, it is exceeded in size, and that only slightly, by but one other picture, that in the Munich art gallery.[2] This latter we feel rela-

tively certain is not the work of Corneille, and hence ours is the largest known painting by him.

A DRAWING OF BONNIVET AT CHANTILLY

To our own mind, perhaps somewhat prejudiced now by pride of possession, and previously by pain of desire, it is superior in quality even to the much better known portrait of Jean de Rieux, Count of Chateauneuf, long highly praised as the masterpiece of Corneille, more recently acclaimed by Dimier as too fine to be his work, and hence assigned by him to an unknown artist designated as the master of this particular painting. While this work is surely not by Corneille, or modelling of the face, especially around the eyes and mouth is dissimilar to his style, its technique is in no sense finer than that of our painting.

In the portrait of Maréchal Bonnivet, characteristic green background forms striking foil for the black hat, the rich velvet garment, and at the same time is harmonious in tone with the delicate flesh tints. Light hazel eyes, with fixed, piercing gaze, lend vitality and emphasize character. The use of delicate blues in the shadows on the forehead, under the eyes, around the mouth, is in marked similarity to the treatment of the finest works attributed to Corneille, and strangely enough anticipates by four hundred years a system of flesh tones developed by Renoir, and readily apparent in our Green Jardiniere by him.

Credence is given to the traditional identification of the subject of the portrait by the drawing at Chantilly on which is written Bonnivet. Neither could represent the more illustrious Admiral Bonnivet, who, having advised Francis I to attempt the battle of Pavia, discovered that its end would be disastrous, and unwilling to survive the defeat of which he had been the chief cause, found death upon the field. It is therefore assumed to depict his son.

The painting was formerly in the collection of Count Montbrizon, Chateau St. Roche, Montauban, France. It was included

in the exhibition of French and Flemish Primitives at the Toledo Museum in 1935 and in the Twentieth Anniversary Exhibition of the Cleveland Museum in the following year.

It now takes its place in our collections with the magnificent portrait of Elizabeth of Valois by Corneille's greater contemporary, François Clouet. It may have been painted a few years earlier than this work, and it is certainly, though by a lesser master, a worthy companion to it. One of the few masterpieces by its artist still remaining, it is most adequate to confer upon him high honor among artists and to stand itself among the most important monuments of early French painting.

[1] Dimier, Histoire de la Peinture Française, Paris, 1925, I, 70.
Dimier, Histoire de la Peinture de Portrait en France au XVIe. Siecle, Paris, 1924, I, 39.

[2] Dimier, Portrait en France, II, 82.

[3] Ibid., I, 40-41.

A FAMOUS CANALETTO ETCHING

THE name Canaletto brings to mind those sunlit canvases of Venetian canals for which he is best known. None the less attractive, although perhaps less noted, are his etchings. Within a period of about two years, Antonio Canale, called Canaletto, etched thirty-one plates, comprising his entire work in that medium.

Born in 1697, Canaletto was a contemporary of another great Venetian artist of the period, Gianbattista Tiepolo. He worked with his father, a scene-painter, and also studied with Luca Carlevaris, who is known as the painter of the earliest views of Venice. In 1719, Canaletto went to Rome where he spent two years. Returning to Venice, he produced many of his best paintings depicting the buildings, canals and bridges of his native city. His knowledge of perspective and love for broad, warmly lighted distances, demonstrated in the oil paintings, is carried over as well to his work in black and white.

He made many drawings in pen and ink, a fine collection of which are in the British Museum. Strange to say, most of Canaletto's paintings and drawings are found outside of Italy, particularly in England. This may be due in part to the activities of the British Consul at Venice at that time, who was also a dealer in books and art objects. He bought the paintings of Canaletto and sent them to England for sale. His encouragement and friendship were obviously appreciated by the artist, who dedicated the published set of his etchings with the following inscription on the title page:

THE PORCH WITH THE LANTERN — CANALETTO

SHOEMAKER FUND PURCHASE

"Views, some taken from nature, some invented, by Antonio Canale, and by him set in perspective, engraved and dedicated to the most illustrious Joseph Smith, Consul of his Brittanic Majesty to the most Serene Venetian Republic, as a sign of homage and esteem."

In his etchings, done between 1540 and 1542, he abandoned the more familiar scenes of Venice for the outskirts of the city and nearby villages. One of the best of these, in the collection of the Museum, acquired from the income provided by the Kate L. and Frederick B. Shoemaker fund, is that called The Porch with the Lantern. It is characteristic of Canaletto's etched work, charming in decorative quality, showing his mastery of precise line, of the accurate recreation of a definite place, of his ability to suggest the heat and luminosity of an Italian summer day.

Through broad arches between columns we see houses built among ruins of classical temples and an elaborate arch, all set along the very shore of the sea. Just visible at the water's edge are the masts and sails of ships at anchor. The colonnade in the foreground is of a ruined structure overgrown with leaves, the lantern of the title, in dilapidated condition, hanging from the center of one of the arches. The architectural details, while only suggested, are thoroughly indicative of their actual character.

Technically, Canaletto's etchings are as simple as possible. He uses crisp, uncrossed lines, without special accents, and leaves nothing to the whims of the printer in inking, wiping, or other tricks of printing. Each shadow, each ray of sunlight, is produced by the placing of clear-cut lines.

For a long time the prints of Canaletto were almost unnoticed. It is said that the credit for their reintroduction to popular attention is due to an essay by Robert Louis Stevenson. Certainly, Canaletto is one of the greatest etchers of the eighteenth century, perhaps the greatest Italian etcher of all time.

ACQUIRED FROM THE DEVILBISS BEQUEST

IT WOULD be illuminating to make a study of the difference between a genius as a man and as an artist. How do we reconcile, for example, the superhuman sensitivity and serenity of some of Beethoven's slow movements with the crudeness of the boor who threw soup in waiters' faces? How can the man whose music has the keenest intellectual control and inventive imagination be responsible, in his writings, for incoherence and naivety? In Delacroix we have the same paradox, but with a difference, for it is in his daily life and thinking that we find the well-behaved and logical man and in his painting the emotional innovator.

The best approach to Delacroix as a thinker is his own Journal, which, with some breaks, spans over forty years of his life. Written without any literary pretension, it is a diary containing comments on artists and painting, recollections of conversations, incidents of daily life, and abundant theorizing.

To see one of Delacroix's studies of a fighting lion and tiger one would think the artist a highly emotional, romantic, and powerful personality. Yet his own words reveal him as a mild, conservative, middle-class intellectual whose taste reached far into the past and whose thoughts were austere rather than romantic. Indeed, Delacroix shows in his writings little of the romantic warmth that one would guess of him from his paintings. He gives thanks for having escaped "being bored and harassed all one's life, as is the man caught in the bonds of a family."[1] Again, he says: "I hate it when people spend a lot of time over such episodical personages as dogs and children, who never interest anybody but their owners or the people who brought them into the world."[2]

The man whose paintings were such a striking break with the past and who might have looked at himself as a prophet writes, in 1857: "The arts, since the sixteenth century, the point of perfec-

tion, show nothing but perpetual decadence."[3] And with whom does Delacroix, the painter of melodrama and emotional agitation, find a sympathetic relationship in music? With Beethoven? On the contrary, he cannot understand Beethoven. His favorite composer is Mozart, the prince of clarity and emotional restraint.

Again, the man who painted Liberty Guiding the People might presumably have a democratic faith in the masses. Yet we read: "I have told him that Paris . . . was composed of five hundred persons who have minds and who judge and think for the mass of two-legged animals who live in Paris, but who are Parisians in name only."[4]

But if Delacroix had a certain intellectual aloofness and pride, he was also fair to others and respectful of their opinions. There is a basic kindliness behind his detestation of "that so-called frankness which permits people to utter cutting or wounding opinions . . . for which I have the greatest antipathy. To speak frankly, one should, with a disposition like that, live in a stable where relationships are established by thrusts of a pitchfork or by horns."[5]

His Journal ranges over a multitude of subjects and shows him to have been an omnivorous reader. Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Edgar Allan Poe, Alexander Dumas, George Sand, Charles Dickens and a great many others are spoken of and often quoted at length. Yet he approaches them all as an intellectual dilettante. He never troubled to relate his thinking to a central problem or hypothesis and he never developed a clear philosophy. Thus his alert and active mind, which might have been a clarifying factor in his life, served rather to divert him and to provide an escape from the emotional intensity and reality of his artistic experience.

We thus discover that Delacroix was a romantic almost in spite of himself. He had the intellectual curiosity and the breadth of interest of the renaissance mind but failed to harmonize it with his emotional nature. This disparity caused him great unrest, and, indeed, there is hardly a note of gaiety in his entire Journal or in his painting. He remains a lonely figure, without followers and without, in a sense, predecessors. Even before his death the interest of the art world had swung towards Courbet, whose realism he detested and could not understand. The very one-sidedness of his art gives it its unique power and expressiveness.

By turning his attention in part to genre subjects and by a lofty but always highly personalized treatment of his historical paintings Delacroix, along with Géricault and Gros, made the momentous break with the formalism of the Empire. After him

THE RETURN OF COLUMBUS EUGENE DELACROIX
PURCHASED FROM THE BEQUEST OF THOMAS A. DEVILBISS

the trend did not happen to flow in the direction of romanticism, but without him the die could not have been so clearly cast. This kindly, sensitive, inquiring man, with his deeply emotional feeling for art, is all the more remarkable a revolutionary because he stood almost alone.

Delacroix would have been ostracised by the official artists of his time if for no other reason than for his insistence that "the first merit of a picture is to be a feast for the eye."[6] The previous artists, headed by Jacques David, had maintained that art should be characterised by sobriety and formal balance. The subject matter, when not in the service of the state, was preferably to deal with classical mythology. With such rigid limitations art had become austere and intellectual. Delacroix had the instinct and the courage to remove art from a pedestal and place it on his own level. He brought back picturesqueness, charm, and grace. He used, for subject matter, scenes that anyone would find interesting, and without insisting that they be related to any idea.

In order to carry out his revolutionary idea of making a picture not only interesting, but a feast for the eye, he had to adopt new

methods of painting. Where David conscientiously finished each part before going on to the next, Delacroix built up his paintings as a whole. "The art of the painter consists in fixing the attention only upon what is necessary," he said.[7] Hence he abandoned the cold, smooth tones of his predecessors, used heavy brush strokes and sharply contrasting highlights and shadows. This provided the means for expressing both his emotional agitation and the movement of his figures in space. In this respect, perhaps, Delacroix, at his best, is superior even to Rubens, for Rubens' movement tends to be more evident in line and color than in form and space. And it is in this respect and in his emotionalism that he differs most from the early masters whose techniques he copied.

The Return of Columbus, by Delacroix, a gift to the Museum of the late Thomas A. DeVilbiss, comes from a Canadian collection and has been exhibited in the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago. It was commissioned for the Palazzo San Donato in 1839 and has been in various important collections before coming to America. In the painting, Columbus is seen mounting a flight of steps at the top of which Ferdinand and Isabella stand under a canopy to greet him. At the sides are spectators, including some "Indians," and across the foot of the steps lies a pile of articles from the New World. In the background are the buildings of a large city.

In keeping with the dignity of the theme, Delacroix shows himself to be more reserved than usual in this painting. Nevertheless the stamp of his romanticism is indicated by the flicker of highlights over the surface of the canvas, by the tendency of outlines to merge with their surroundings, and by the many small elements of individualised movement. In the rather poetic treatment of the three riders and in the arrangement there is a suggestion of Titian. The influence of Veronese is apparent in the blue of the steps.

In view of the relative scarcity of Delacroix's works in this country, the importance of the artist, the popular subject, and the purchase of the painting through a bequest of a deeply interested friend and Trustee of the Museum, unusual interest attaches to its acquisition.

[1] The Journal of Eugène Delacroix, translated by Walter Pach, New York, 1937, p. 222.

[2] Ibid., p. 465. [3] Ibid., p. 540. [4] Ibid., p. 470 f. [5] Ibid., p. 188.

[6] Ibid., p. 700. Cf., also, Dorothy Bussy, Eugène Delacroix, London, 1912, pp. 101 ff. for a discussion of Delacroix's anticipation of Impressionism.

[7] Journal, p. 542.

AFTERNOON IN THE PARK — HARDIE GRAMATKY

SOME NEW AMERICAN WATER COLORS

TO THE group of American water colors exhibited in Gallery 22 the Museum has recently made three additions. These were selected from a comprehensive exhibition held in October in which each of seventeen outstanding American painters was represented by five or six works. Thus, there was brought to our visitors a cross-section of contemporary water color painting evidencing the present interest in the medium by artists of note. Variety and originality were displayed in subjects as well as in techniques.

One of the most popular water colors in the exhibition was Hardie Gramatky's well-painted Afternoon in the Park. Its fresh color, sense of sunlight and motion are produced by expert handling of the medium. Born in Texas in 1907, Gramatky has already had a number of successful one-man exhibitions and ranks high in the field of water color painting.

An example of the work of Nicolai Cikovsky was chosen because of its masterly treatment of a simple subject. It is the only still life in the Museum's water color collection. Still Life with Peaches is typical of Cikovsky's flowing drawing, bold yet subtle color and use of white space as an important part of the

STILL LIFE WITH PEACHES NICOLAI CIKOVSKY

composition. The carelessly arranged fruit on the polished surface of table, an old pitcher with flowers, and blue textile draped at the back are all painted with a remarkable feeling for texture. Cikovsky is one of the leading painters in this country, both in oil and water color, in figure, landscape and still life. Another of his works in the October exhibition, The White Boat, was privately purchased in Toledo.

Rockport, Massachusetts, by Julius Delbos, is the third water color acquired. The architecture of New England houses is combined with luxuriant trees to make an attractive arrangement of light and dark, shadows of the trees on buildings accentuating in contrast the warm sunshine of a summer afternoon. Delbos, born in England in 1879, but having spent most of his life in this country, is a well-known painter in oil and water color, whose works have been included in most of the important exhibitions.

COMING EXHIBITIONS

THE list of exhibitions planned for the early months of 1939 is an impressive one. For January there has been arranged an exhibition of about two hundred sculptured terra cottas from Chinese tombs, most of them dating from the Han and the T'ang Dynasties. At the same time there is shown in Gallery 8 an unusually fine collection of engravings and woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer, lent by Mr. Charles J. Rosenbloom of Pittsburgh.

Water colors by Amy L. Kimpton, Toledo artist, occupy Gallery 21 during January. Beginning January 15 and continuing for two weeks there will be exhibited drawings and photographs comprising the National Exhibition of Representative Buildings of the Post-War Period, assembled and selected by the American Institute of Architects.

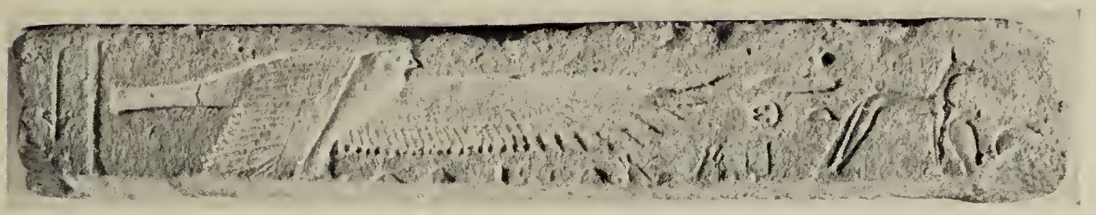
February will bring the Great Lakes Exhibition which was organized by the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo. It includes one hundred sixty-five paintings by artists of the United States and Canada living in the region bordering the Great Lakes, and will be shown in most of the cities adjacent thereto.

A comprehensive showing of Contemporary Swedish Prints will also be held in February. The Exhibition was assembled by the Swedish Association of Fine Arts in Stockholm and sent here in exchange for the National Exhibition of Contemporary American Prints, which were sent to Sweden for exhibition. In Gallery 21 there will be shown for the first time in Toledo paintings in oil by the recently appointed instructor in our School, Manuel Barkan.

Plans are being made for an exhibition of Contemporary Decorative Art for March. Similar to that held last year, but of somewhat broader scope, textiles, ceramics and glass by well-known designers and leading manufacturers will be featured. Especially interesting will be the group of modern textiles designed by Dorothy W. Liebes of San Francisco, who is Director of Decorative Arts for the San Francisco Fair.

The Memorial Exhibition of the works of Robert B. Harshe, former Director of the Art Institute of Chicago, has also been scheduled for March. It consists of a number of splendid paintings which he would never exhibit in his lifetime because he felt it would be unfair for him, as a museum director, to place his works in even the slightest competition with those of painters who were dependent upon their art for their livelihood.

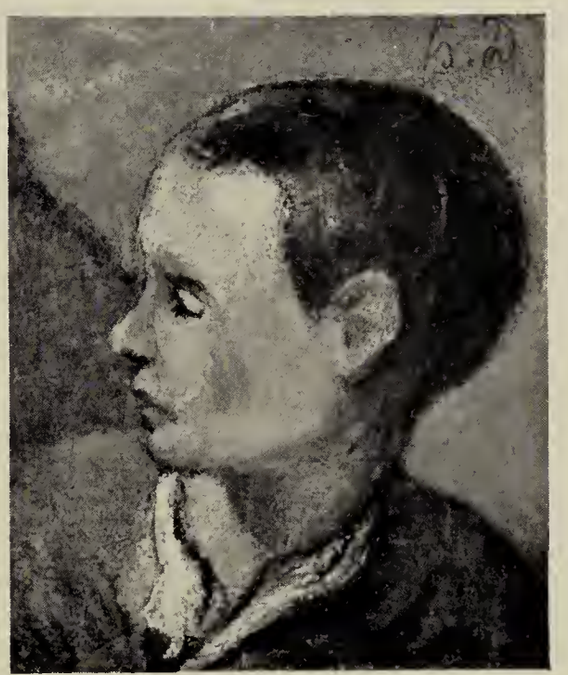
The Toledo painter whose works will be shown during that month is Marian D. Maxwell.



There has been presented to the Museum a most interesting carving from ancient Egypt. This stone, which probably once was the lintel of a doorway, is decorated in low incised relief with a bird with wing outstretched to form a typical Egyptian decorative form, with a more naturalistic animal, perhaps a jackal, sleek and thin, and with hieroglyphs, as yet untranslated. It probably was once joined with another piece upon which the ornamental forms and the inscription were continued. It comes as the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ward M. Canaday who secured it while traveling in Egypt.

The Toledo Museum now possesses a splendid Head of a Boy in bronze by Charles Despiau, recently acquired as an anonymous gift. This sculptor, one of the four most noted pupils of Rodin, was previously represented in our collections by the Man Seated. He has received more acclaim for his portrait busts than for his figures; hence this gift is a most important supplement to our first work by him. It is a delightful depiction of the charm and innocence of youth.

Another highly valued anonymous gift is the delightful small Head of a Man by Honoré Daumier. Quite characteristic of his hand, in it monumentality in miniature is accomplished through largeness of concept, simplicity of modeling, positive drawing, definite outline. Highlights, adroitly placed, enliven dark yet warm tones of ruddy flesh, greyed garment, relieve otherwise quiet though luminous quality. The work of an artist now recognized as one of the greatest of nineteenth century French painters, it is a most interesting document for the study of his style, remarkable for economy of means, boldness of execution.



MUSEUM NEWS

After The Meeting by Cecilia Beaux has recently been lent to an exhibition at the Montclair Art Museum, of which Mary Cooke Swartwout is Director. Mrs. Swartwout will be remembered here as having entered museum work as Registrar of our School of Design. She left that position to become Director of the Grand Rapids Art Association whence she went to the Montclair Museum, where she is meeting with a highly gratifying response to her enlightened leadership. The painting by Miss Beaux is one of those installed in the Maurice A. Scott Galleries by Florence Scott Libbey.

Two paintings from the Maurice A. Scott Galleries of the Toledo Museum, the Portrait of B. J. Blommers by Thomas Eakins and the Spirit of Dawn by Albert P. Ryder were honored by invitational inclusion in the Biennial Exhibition at Venice, Italy, in the summer of 1938. They have now been returned to the Museum and hang in their accustomed places.

The long awaited Catalogue of European Paintings should be off the press in the late winter. It will be unique among museum catalogues in that every painting will be reproduced, and the text concerning it will appear on the facing page, thus facilitating reference and study. American paintings have been reserved for a succeeding publication to obviate the production of an unwieldy volume.

The Senior Class of the Maumee Valley Country Day School has visited the Museum each week this fall for a series of lectures on the most important of the collections. Instruction has been given by graduates of the Junior League training class of last year and members of the Museum staff. Those who have participated in the guidance of the Day School class include Mrs. Lamson Rheinfrank, Mrs. A. Lewis Bentley, and Mrs. Alfred Hirth.

A number of prints from the Museum's collections were lent to the Allen Memorial Art Museum of Oberlin College for exhibition in December.

Our superb example of a sacrificial Chinese bronze vessel of the Chou Dynasty was lent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for their exhibition of Chinese Bronzes, held during October and November.

A group of prints including the work of Aldegraver, Beham, Charles Jacque, Maxime Lalanne, Joseph Pennell, Van Ostade, and Lucas van Leyden, has recently been presented to the Museum by Carl B. Spitzer.